

I strongly object to Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force its stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary, especially so close to election day. Moreover, I object to the FCC regulations that even allow Sinclair to impose such an action on its affiliates. This is yet another demonstration of the corporate oligarchy that now rules the United States in its own interest.

Politicians boast about our "freedom," and many naïve Americans continue to believe that our news outlets are actually serving the public interest. But I find I have to turn to the foreign and alternative press to find out what really is happening in the U.S. There, I can learn some of the reasons for the huge discrepancies between my own observations and the nonsense promulgated on our airwaves.

It is a crime against democracy that so many news stories are suppressed and appear only in clandestine sources, such as Project Censored from Sonoma State University in California. Their literature includes the following pithy quotation:

"Media criticism does exist in America. But by and large, it is not citizen-based criticism designed to make media a better source of information in a democracy. Instead, it is a cynical manipulation of the discourse designed to silence even the mildest dissent, from the conservative, militantly pro-corporate dogma that has come to pass for news in an era when 'reporters' brag about the size of their American-flag lapel pins."

—Robert McChesney and John Nichols

We need to strengthen media ownership rules to prevent corporate usurpation of public airwaves. FCC's license renewal process should include wide publicity of such abuses and active solicitation of public commentary. Most citizens do not even realize they have the power to comment.